The Married Life of Helen and Warren

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Helen Comes in Touch With a Real Tragedy, but Warren Is Brutally Unsympathetic

Helen stood brooding at the window, looking out on the grayness of the early London dusk. It was not four, but the street lamps were already lit and lights gleamed in many windows.

Mabel Herbert Urner.

It was raw and damp. People hurried by with drawn shoulders and upturned collars, their faces gravely anxious. A subdued excitement was in the air. With constant rumors of Zeppelin raids, the Londoners were at last aroused.

She went into the bedroom. As she gazed moodily across the narrow courtyard, a woman's form was suddenly outlined against the drawn blind of a lighted window. Her every movement was clearly silhouetted.

Helen watched her, fascinated. With clenched hands she was walking up and down the room. Then she dropped into a chair, her face buried in its cushioned seat, her shoulders quivering with convulsive sobs. There were abandonment and abject grief in every line of her slender figure.

Something that looked like a newspaper lay on the floor beside her. Helen's thoughts leaped to that daily column of killed and wounded.

At any other time she would not have followed the impulse that now came to her. But the war had broken down many barriers.

The next moment Helen was hurrying down the hall to the apartment opposite. It was some time before her timid ring was answered.

"Who is it?" asked a tremulous voice, the door opening a few inches.

"Mrs. Curtis—from the apartment next door," faltered Helen.

The door opened wider, the woman still shielding herself behind it.

"I—I know you're in trouble," impulsively. "I saw you through the window—the curtain was down, but I could see your shadow. Don't think me intrusive, but I knew you were alone—and I couldn't help coming."

The woman's only answer was to turn back into the room and throw herself sobbing on the couch. Helen followed, constrained and awkward. After all, what could she do—what could any stranger do?

"It's someone—in the war?" gently, drawing a chair beside her.

The head on the pillow nodded.

Helen took one of the hot, clenched hands in both her own.

A small desk clock ticked harshly.

Then the woman sat up and looked at her dully.

"Oh, it's not what you think," recklessly. "It's not my husband or my brother—or anyone whom I can grieve over openly. That's why I'm alone. I don't dare have anyone with me—anyone that might know."

Helen felt a tightening in her throat; she did not attempt to speak.

"He was brought home yesterday wounded—fatally, the papers said. That's all I know. I can't go to him. I can't even telephone—they'd know my voice." She looked unflinchingly at Helen, "He's—another woman's husband."

Helen did not start or draw back; her hold on the hot hand tightened.

"This morning I drove by in a cab. The blinds were down, but there was no—crape. I'm going again tonight. Oh, it's torture—not knowing!"

Abruptly she rose and took from a desk drawer a leather-cased photograph. It was a strong, clean-cut face of a virile Englishman.

"There was nothing the whole world couldn't have known," her burning eyes were on the picture. "And yet—now that he's dying I'm almost sorry there wasn't!" defiantly. "Can you understand that?"

Helen nodded.

"Oh, we're more natural, more primitive in times like these! That's why I can tell you this. And yet," slow—ly, "if he should get well—it would be just the same. Oh, we've made such a waste of our lives—such a pitiful waste! It was all my fault, but I've paid for it," bitterly. "I've paid for one foolish, hysterical moment with six years of torture."

"Six years," breathed Helen.

"We were engaged," she steadied her voice. "Oh, it was such a trivial thing we quarreled over! And he—he took it seriously. He threw up everything and went to India. Last year he married and came back to London. We knew the same people, we couldn't help meeting. His wife doesn't care—she's always with other men.

"Then he began coming here. He never made an engagement, yet I came to expect him every Wednesday at five—I lived for that hour. We never talked—I mean about this. Yet, we both knew.

"The day he left for the war—he came to say good-by. He tried to make it a conventional call—but I couldn't. I was the one to break down. He said there was only one solution—for him not to come back."

Her voice broke. She looked at Helen with hopeless eyes.

"Oh, how I've watched the papers! But there's been nothing until yesterday."

"And yet," murmured Helen, "if you had married him, wouldn't giving him up now be even harder than it is?"

"Harder?" fiercely. "If we'd had six years of happiness, would our lives have been wasted? Six years with him! I'd barter my soul for one!"

"Oh, I can't stand this," hysterically. "I must know," turning desperately to the desk phone. "No—no, I mustn't phone. Don't let me!"

"I— Can't I phone for you?" faltered Helen.

"Oh," looking at her wildly, "why didn't I think of that? Eight-two-six-nine Mayfair," excitedly. "Ask for Lieutenant —— No—wait, I can't give you his name!"

"Need I know his name? Couldn't I say the lieutenant?"

"Yes—yes," eagerly, thrusting the receiver into Helen's hand.

"Eight-two-six-nine Mayfair? I would like to know how the lieutenant is."

"Lieutenant Carson died this morning at eleven thirty," came the answer.

Although he immediately rang off, Helen still held the receiver. How could she tell her?

But the woman's intuition needed no words.

"When did he die?" her voice was curiously quiet.

"At eleven thirty."

"That was after I drove by this morning. He was there then—I might have seen him!" Then abruptly, "You'll understand if I ask you to go now, won't you? I think I'd rather be alone."

"Oh, I can't leave, you know," frightened at her strange quietness. "You mustn't be alone. Let me stay with you or send for someone."

She shook her head. "I couldn't have anyone here without telling them. But you needn't be anxious.

"But later, in the night, if you should need one—will you let me know? Promise me that! I can't bear to think of you here alone."

"Yes, I promise."

And with that Helen had to be content. She went back down the hall haunted by the picture of that woman alone with her grief.

When she opened the door she started with dismay at the sound of Warren whistling.

"Hello!" without looking up. "This blamed London mud sticks like —" Then he saw her face. "What the deuce's the matter now?"

"Oh, dear, I—I've been with the woman next door," trying to hide her face against his unresponsive arm.

"Who's the woman next door?" elbowing her away, the whiskbroom in his hand. "What are you sniveling about, anyway?"

It was hard to tell such a story while Warren, grimly unsympathetic, brushed his clothes, put on a fresh collar and cleaned his nails. Helen stumbled through it brokenly.

"Told all that yarn to you, eh? Sounds like it was made out of whole cloth. Guess there's a lot she didn't tell."

"Warren, stop!" turning on him fiercely. "Oh, I shouldn't have told you! I might have known you wouldn't understand. She's refined, delicate—"

"Huh," attacking his hair savagely, a brush in each hand, "not much delicacy in spieling off that tale to a stranger."

"Oh, how can you be so hard!" passionately. "Sometimes I think you haven't any—"

"Well, I'm not haunting my feelings in everybody's face. I've always said women had no sense of reticence. Think a man would bleat out a story like that? Not if you grilled him on hot irons!"

COSTUME FOR STREET

MAY BE DEVELOPED IN MANY KINDS OF MATERIALS.

Taffeta, Serge, or Linen All Equally Suitable—Narrow Cotton Soutache Braid Perhaps Best That Can Be Employed.

Taffeta, serge or linen—any of these are suitable for the development of the attractive street costume of the cut.

There is a pocketlike blouse worn over a soft, high-collared guimpe of white net that shows between the open-front edges.

The blouse is just caught together at the top, and the fronts are cut off

Coat-Dress Suitable for Serge or Linen.

short in square tabs that hang free of the belt. These are embroidered in some simple outline work, or braided. The sides and back of the blouse are tucked under the belt and an embroidered peplum added below. There are long sleeves cut with the raglan shoulder line and finished with odd and attractive circular cuffs buttoned on at the sides. The neck has a deep turned-back collar rounded across the the back.

For an underskirt it will be best to use a very thin silk down the front breadth of which a panel of the dress material is sewed, and the spaces at the top and bottom that show between the open edges of the tunic are garnished with a touch of the embroidery or braiding used on the waist.

The tunic is full length, except just in front, where the material is cut away diagonally. At the top a four-inch space is left between the edges, and by crossing them farther down the triangular space results. Pocket slashes are cut just in front of either hip.

Should you use linen for this design the braiding can be done with a narrow soutache braid. It comes in fast colors and washes very well.

SELECT THE RIGHT COLORS

One of the Main Ideas to Be Observed by Woman Who Aims to Be Well Dressed.

A sallow skin is invariably beautified by blue, particularly the brighter shades. But all grays, tans, moles and undecided colors should be most rigidly avoided. The woman with black hair and a sallow complexion can always dress in the rather brilliant colors, while the woman with light brown hair must make the most of blues, cerise, pinky maize, and possibly scarlet. She should seldom wear white; and must beware of the delicate pastel shades that so beautify the blonde and brunette with a pink and white skin.

Very few people can look as smart or charming in one color as in another, and while a dress of the most becoming hue incurs the expenditure of not one penny more than a robe of doubtful taste it is worth three or four times as much to its wearer. It enhances her good points and makes the very best of her defects, and is still wearable—nay, more, still charming—after a length of service that would have taken every scrap of effect and charm from a dress which had been chosen for its style alone.

Many women owe their reputation for beauty to being harmoniously dressed—for choosing the right color scheme and having the courage to stick to it. But, of course, this is not by any means an easy thing to do, particularly in these days of "ready-mades," when in order to be faithful to one's belief in color-care it is often necessary to pass by an unusually attractive hat or blouse simply because its hue is apt to accentuate the wearer's paleness when fatigued, or, in another case, to detract from the brightness of her eyes.

But the limitations imposed upon a woman by this care and discrimination in dress are compensated for by the fact that however simply or economically attired she is always at her best.

RETURNS TO MODES OF OLD

Liking for the Early Victorian Styles Is Just Now Extremely Pronounced.

Eliminate the long trailing skirt and the hobble from our midst and there is practically no mode that can be described as demode. The subject of the crinoline has several times come under discussion.

The conditions of life are completely altered since its triumph.

Motors and railways and other means of transit will ever militate against its resuscitation. The picturesque style of dress is meeting with approval, but that does not mean the crinoline. The conceits which are most in vogue are the offspring of the days of the early Victorian era. Women were essentiallly feminine then, and today they are harking back to this place in their mode of living as well as in their fashions. Raiment for out-of-door wear is thoroughly practical and smart, the esthetic or picturesque note being reserved for the home.

There is nothing new under the sun is an axiom that is forcibly brought home when one studies the newest versions of the old world headgear that has once more come into use again. In the old coaching days the postilion wore a hat; with the shape we are all familiar. The smart mondaine now has this hat carried out in panama; around the crown is a drapery of black satin, in front a single quill is introduced, on which is appliqued the wearer's favorite flower. The old world sailor has a low crown and very broad brim.

SKULL CAP FROM PARIS

A Very Chic Looking Toque Is This Skull Cap of Straw by Cora Harsan of Paris. Shadow Checked Taffeta Runs Through Vertical Bands of Straw and Surmounting the Brim Are Two Horsehair Brushes Set in Ornate Cups.

Braid and Fur.

Braid and fur are interestingly combined in ornaments for cloth coats. There are frogs of black braid edged with a narrow fringe of soft black fur, and, with a fur collar or braid banding on the coat, the effect of these frocks would be very good.

To Unscrew Bottle Top.

When you cannot unscrew the top of a bottle try inserting the top between the door and the jamb and pulling back the door; this will hold the top so tightly that you will have no difficulty in unscrewing it.

Temperance

(Conducted by the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union.)

COULD BUILD SIX CANALS.

An unusual sight and one not without special significance was that of Secretary of State Bryan signing the cards of 12,000 men who had taken the pledge of total abstinence at one of the Billy Sunday meetings, after Mr. Bryan's address against the drink curse. His attack against the liquor evil from the economic standpoint included the following statements:

"It is estimated that the people of the United States spend almost $2,500,000,000 annually on intoxicating liquors. The cost of the Panama canal, the most gigantic engineering feat in history, was about $400,000,000. Is it not appalling to think that we spend for drink every year something like six times the cost of the Panama canal?

"I have endeavored to obtain an accurate estimate of the amount of money spent on education in this country, and the figure given me is $750,000,000. We spend for drink more than three times as much as we spend for education.

The annual appropriations of the federal government are a little less than $1,250,000,000. This sum includes the salaries of all the public officials, from the president down. All of these government agencies employed in administering the federal government of this great nation are operated at an expense of less than $1,250,000,000.

"Think, if the mind can comprehend it, of this nation spending twice that amount for alcoholic liquors."

OUT OF THE MUD.

"In 1912, when West Virginia was one vast battleground for state-wide prohibition," writes Lora S. LaMance, National W. C. T. U. organizer, in the Union Signal, "I spent seven months in the state. In 1915, with prohibition an accomplished fact, I visited it again. The change is marked. A blind man could see it. Out from the principal towns the 'land of muddy roads' is building here, there, yonder, paved roads into the country. Almost every mile has been built since the state went dry. It is a new experience to the farmer, when the dirt roads are almost hub deep in yellow clay, to drive five or ten miles into town on a hard brick road, and get there with team and carriage as spick and span as when he started. City streets are being paved, parks are being laid out, street car lines are being extended, and new buildings are going up everywhere. In some of the smaller towns, because the demand is so great, houses are rented at extravagant prices."

STIMULATION OF BUSINESS.

The Chicago Banker, a bank periodical, gives under "Iowa Banking News" the following statement:

"Des Moines banks did a big business Saturday, supplying cash to merchants and grocers. At first the cause for the sudden demand for coin was not apparent to the financiers. Then they realized that the saloons of the city had been closed a week. Workmen, who had been cashing their checks in the thirst parlors on Saturday nights and leaving a goodly share of the exchange in the saloon keeper's till were, instead, getting them cashed in legitimate places of business. Des Moines has been dry two weeks now. If business has been injured, as the wets so long predicted, there is no evidence of that fact. Already the merchants see a stimulation of business, and money which formerly went for booze is already beginning to go for food and clothing and in the payment of honest debts."

NO BETTER?

It was a south-bound Indiana avenue owl car and it hardly resembled a returning band of Sunday school picnickers. At Twenty-second street, among others who boarded the car were two levee characters, says the Chicago Tribune.

"It's pretty tough," offered one to the other.

"Yes, but wait till after election," replied the other. "Everything's fixed."

"Say, listen," responded the other. "Haven't you heard that just before every election we ever helped to carry?"

"It ain't going to be any better after election"—he shook his head sadly. "It ain't ever going to be any better."

OBEYED THE LAW.

"I contain two pints of pure rye whisky and six bottles of beer," was the placard in large letters that Ed Strange wore on his hat walking through the streets of Grafton. He was obeying literally the West Virginia law that "containers" of alcohol shall be properly labeled in large letters.